

REMARKS

In the Claims

The Examiner has indicated that claims 7, 8, 9 and 15 would be allowable if re-written in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant notes claims 8 and 9 in the previous listing of claims depend from claim 7. This means that claim 8 and claim 9 need not be written in independent form but can remain dependent on claim 7 and still be allowable, as long as claim 7 is re-written in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In the previous listing of claims, claim 7 depended on base claim 1 and intervening claims 3, 5 and 6. Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claims 3, 5, 6 and 7, which have been canceled. This is tantamount to re-writing claim 7 in independent form as required, but has the added benefit of reducing the number of claim amendments required.

Claim 1 is therefore allowable.

Claims 4, 8, 9 and 11 have been amended so that they depend from amended claim 1.

Thus, claims 2, 5, 8-14, 16 and 17-20 all depend from allowable claim 1, so that these claims are by definition also allowable.

A new claim 23 based on claim 15, its base claim 1 and intervening claims 3 and 5 is now presented. Thus, claim 23 represents claim 15 as redrafted in independent form to include its base claim and all intervening claims. *New claim 23 is therefore allowable.*

Minor amendments have been made to claims 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 14 and 16 to improve the claim wording.

The informalities associated with claims 1, 3 and 8 in the previously pending claims as noted by the Examiner have been rectified in the present listing of the claims.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1, 2, 4, 8-14, 16-20 and 23 are presently pending in the Application. Applicant respectfully submits that for the reasons set forth above, all of these claims are allowable.

Accordingly, a Notice of Allowability is respectfully requested to be issued in due course.

Respectfully submitted by:

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